

REVIEW

THE BEETLES OF THE UNITED STATES. *A Manual for Identification. Introduction and Fascicles, 1-9.* Ross H. ARNETT, JR. 1960. Catholic University of America Press, Washington. 210 pp., illus.

This is the first section of what is scheduled to be a key to the families and genera of the Coleoptera of North America north of Mexico. The book is thus in the tradition of LeConte's *Classification of the Coleoptera of North America* (exclusive of the Coccinellidae, Chrysomelidae, and Rhynchophora) (1861-73), of LeConte and Horn's work of the same title (1883), and of Bradley's *Manual of the Genera of Beetles of America North of Mexico* (1930), and there is no doubt but that it will prove as useful and as essential as these books have been. The classification used is a modification of the one devised by Crowson in his *Natural Classification of the families of Coleoptera* (1955).

A 44-page Introduction reviews the external anatomy of adult beetles and gives an artificial key to families of the Coleoptera of the World based on adult characters, with families not further treated in the book in parentheses. The area covered by the book is continental United States, but most of the genera of immediately adjacent areas of Canada and Mexico are included.

Each family is covered in a separate fascicle with separate pagination, bibliography, and index, but continuous pagination is likewise provided and we are assured that there will be a cumulative index at the end. For each family there is a general introduction including a nice figure of a typical species, a fairly detailed description, ecology, distribution, etc. This is followed by an artificial key to genera and a list of the subfamilies, tribes, genera, and subgenera in natural sequence. For each genus and subgenus there is given the author of the genus, the date of original description, synonyms, number of North American species, and the North American distribution.

The present 210-page section covers the Cupedidae and the eight families of

Adephaga. The 128-page section on Carabidae is by Dr. George E. Ball and carries the classification by keys to subgenera with a short paragraph of discussion devoted to each genus and subgenus. Dr. Ball has provided us with a paper which will rank with George Horn's essay of 1881 as one of the great documents on the North American fauna of this family of beetles.

Since the labor has been assumed of indicating the distribution of the genera, one might wish that it had been a bit more adequately done. Looking at the matter from the viewpoint of the Pacific Northwest fauna alone, I find the following deficiencies in the descriptions of distribution: *Rhysodes*, Wn., Id., Or.; *Clinidium*, B. C., Wn.; *Apteraliphus*, Wn.; *Brychius*, B. C., Wn., Id., Or.; *Hydrotrupes*, Or.; *Agabinus*, B. C., Wn., Or.; *Agabus*, B. C., Wn., Id., Or.; *Lacornis*, B. C., Wn., Id.; *Neoscutopterus*, B. C.; *Cybister*, Wn., Or. I do not suggest that a state-by-state description of the distribution should have been given but that the general descriptions should be formed so as to imply these areas. *Dineutus*, said to be "generally distributed," is virtually unknown from western North America except possibly extreme southern California. In Dytiscidae, *Deronectes* and *Oreodytes* are treated as genera on p. 195, as subgenera on p. 198. On p. 53 no mention is made of the recent attempt of E. Rivalier (*Revue Française d'Entomologie* 17, 1950: 217-244; 21, 1954: 249-268) to subdivide *Cicindela* into a number of genera and subgenera. These are all trivial matters, however. The book as a whole is a splendid work that puts its author in the forefront of American coleopterists.

The book is issued as separate punched sheets for which the publishers provide, at an extra charge, an efficient loose leaf binder. The printing is by letter press on an excellent quality of thin opaque paper.

Now that this new key to genera is underway, some North American coleopterist or coleopterists should give his, her, or their attention to the preparation of a new catalogue of our beetle fauna.

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